

STATINTL

# Jones Was Sukarno's Pal

## U.S. Ambassador Left Imprint By Using Personal Diplomacy

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**A**FTER ALMOST seven years at his post, Howard Palfrey Jones is resigning as United States Ambassador to Indonesia.

He is leaving just as Indonesia has extended its "confrontation" against Malaysia to the whole United Nations by resigning from the world organization with contempt.

He is leaving with United States-Indonesian relations back in the same precarious state he found them when he went to President Sukarno's volatile archipelago in 1958.

But the years have definitely witnessed Jones's imprint. His critics look upon this imprint as that of a patsy for Sukarno. Those who praise him say he accomplished more than the possible in an impossible situation.

This divergence of opinion naturally raises the question of just what the role of a United States ambassador is in the last half of the 20th century? How does he represent his President in a country which may be spinning under entirely different laws of gravity?

At first look, Howard Jones would not seem to be the most likely candidate for such a study. The United States Ambassador with the longest tenure in a single country, Jones, a weary-looking, balding man of 66, is frail in build, soft in voice and his facial expression on the initial "How do you do?" seems almost angelically naive.

Jones has been a newspaper editor and owner, a journalism teacher, a National Municipal League executive, an also-ran on the Republican ticket for a New York State Assembly seat, a World War II Army colonel and later Government rehabilitator in Germany, a United States aid mission chief in Indonesia and, just before his ambassadorial post, a deputy assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern economic affairs.

### A Time for 'Statesmen'

**E**ARLY IN 1958, Jones was dispatched to Djakarta as ambassador by the late John Foster Dulles and told his job would require "a great effort of statesmanship."

This was an understatement. Jones arrived in Indonesia's capital just after

the United States was caught red-handed assisting an Indonesian Moslem-military rebellion against President Sukarno, who was considered too left-wing.

As Jones set foot on Indonesian soil, the young United States charge d'affaires was seeing Foreign Minister Subandrio with the extraordinary request for permission to land Marines on Indonesia's oil-rich island of Sumatra in order to "protect" American citizens there from the United States-assisted rebels.

A Foreign Ministry official who was present told me later that the charge d'affaires made his request with his feet up on the office table and while puffing a cigarette.

"Go back to your embassy and send Mr. Jones here," the angry Subandrio was quoted as saying. "I don't care that he has not yet been officially accredited. I won't deal with anyone else."

Jones knew from his term as United States aid director that Indonesia's was a peculiarly personal government. He immediately set about restoring President Sukarno's confidence in the Ameri-

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